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FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

Strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 48/129 of 20 December 1993 on the strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat, noting that the difficult financial situation of the Centre for Human Rights has created considerable obstacles in implementing the various procedures and mechanisms, negatively influenced the servicing by the Secretariat of the bodies concerned and impaired the quality and precision of the reporting, requested the Secretary-General to make additional proposals to increase further the resources of the human rights programme in 1994-1995, so as to enable the Centre for Human Rights fully to discharge its duties in implementing all the mandates assigned to it by the General Assembly and other legislative bodies; furthermore, it requested the Secretary-General and Member States to ensure that appropriate additional resources from within the existing and future regular budgets of the United Nations are accorded to the Centre for Human Rights to enable it to carry out, in full and on time, the mandates contained in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action without diverting resources from development programmes and activities of the United Nations. Finally, it requested the Secretary-General to submit an interim report to the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session and a final report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session on the

strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights and on the measures taken to implement that resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request. In this connection, the attention of the Commission on Human Rights is drawn to General Assembly resolution 45/248 B, in which the General Assembly reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters; reaffirmed also the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions; and expressed its concern at the tendency of its substantive Committees and other intergovernmental bodies to involve themselves in administrative and budgetary matters.

2. In the light of the significant expansion of the Centre's traditional activities and the new demands that have been placed on it resulting from the additional mandates adopted by the Commission on Human Rights and other legislative bodies, the Secretary-General has included in his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 (Section 21) proposals for strengthening the Centre for Human Rights, which were approved by the General Assembly. These proposals contained the establishment of 43 posts for the Centre (27 at the Professional level and 16 at the General Service level), as follows: 19 posts at the Professional level (one P-5, three P-4, ten P-3 and five P-2) which were redeployed to the Centre in 1992 and 1993 on a temporary basis; three posts (one P-4, one P-2 and one General Service) for the substantive servicing of the Committee against Torture, which were previously funded from extra-budgetary resources; six new posts at the Professional level (one D-1, one P-4 and four P-3); and 15 new General Service posts. These were approved by the General Assembly. In addition, the General Assembly approved the conversion of 12 temporary posts (three P-4, three P-3 and six General Service) into established posts.

3. While approving resources for the Centre for Human Rights, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to review the allocation of resources among the approved programmes of the Centre so as to ensure the most effective delivery of all mandated activities, and requested the Secretary-General to provide the information requested by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for review by the General Assembly at its resumed forty-eighth session. The Advisory Committee had requested information relating to the precise description of the functions to be performed by the incumbents of the new posts and an explanation of the programmatic justifications for the proposed redeployment of posts. This information will be provided to the General Assembly at its resumed session.

4. The General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of up to $US 1,167,500 to implement the activities contained in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, in particular those relating to the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the ratification of human rights treaties and the rights of the child. Such additional appropriation as necessary would be considered by the General Assembly at its resumed forty-eighth session.

5. Regarding the establishment of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of up to $US 1,471,400 to provide for the High Commissioner and his office. Such additional appropriation as necessary would be considered by the General Assembly at its resumed forty-eighth session.

6. Finally, an increase has been approved by the General Assembly under the regular programme of technical cooperation (Section 20) for activities related to advisory services and technical cooperation of the Centre for Human Rights, i.e. the amount of $US 1,036,500 provided for the biennium 1992-1993 was increased to $US 3,895,300 for the biennium 1994-1995. These resources will finance activities aimed at promoting respect for human rights through advisory services, seminars, training courses and granting of fellowships administered by the Centre for Human Rights. Advisory services and technical assistance will be provided to developing countries and countries in transition to a market economy in developing national laws in keeping with international standards and strengthening national institutions systems and infrastructures for the promotion and protection of human rights.